

Claims

1. An assembly comprising an elastic sleeve mounted in a radially stretched condition on a tubular member that extends therebeyond at one end of the sleeve, 5 wherein the tubular member includes a plurality of regions of weakness extending circumferentially therearound and discretely spaced apart along the length thereof.

2. An assembly according to claim 1, wherein the tubular member is of substantially right-cylindrical configuration.

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3. An assembly according to claim 2, wherein the regions of weakness extend circumferentially substantially perpendicularly to the longitudinal axis of the tubular member.

- 15 4. An assembly according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein each region of weakness extends substantially continuously around the tubular member.

5. An assembly according any one of the preceding claims, wherein the regions of weakness comprise indentations extending into the wall of the tubular member from 20 an inner surface thereof.

6. An assembly according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the regions of weakness comprise indentations extending into the wall of the tubular member from an outer surface thereof.

7. An assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the regions of weakness comprise indentations extending into the wall of the tubular member from an inner surface and from an outer surface thereof.
- 5 8. An assembly according to claim 7, wherein inner surface indentations alternate with outer surface indentations along the length of the tubular member.
9. An assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the regions of weakness are provided by the tubular member being of convoluted configuration.
- 10 10. An assembly according to claim 7 or claim 8, wherein the regions of weakness of the inner surface and of the outer surface of the tubular member are of a different length longitudinally of the tubular member.
- 15 11. An assembly according to claim 9, wherein the inner regions of weakness are longer than the outer regions of weakness.
12. An assembly according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the regions of weakness comprises slits, preferably of substantially rectangular configuration.
- 20 13. An assembly according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the ratio of the depth of the regions of weakness transversely to the length of the tubular member to the separation of the regions of weakness longitudinally of the tubular member is between about 1:3 and about 2:1.

14. An assembly according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the extension of the tubular member beyond an end of the elastic sleeve is such that it is arranged to be passed back through the tubular member to be gripped from the other 5 end, by an operator in use, so as to invert and draw the tubular member through itself, thus releasing the sleeve from its stretched condition.

15. An assembly according to claim 14, wherein the extension of the tubular member is at least as long as the sleeve, and preferably longer than the sleeve.

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16. An assembly according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the tubular member comprises a thermoplastic material or blends thereof, including cross-linked thermoplastic material.

15 17. An assembly according any one of the preceding claims, wherein the elastic sleeve comprises an elastomer or a rubber, preferably silicone or EPDM.

18. A method of enclosing an elongate substrate using an assembly according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the assembly is positioned around the 20 substrate with the stretched sleeve longitudinally disposed over its final required position with the extension of the tubular member located invertedly in the annular region between the tubular member and the substrate, wherein, whilst maintaining the sleeve in its required position, the free end of the extension is pulled so as to invert the tubular member supporting the sleeve and to withdraw it through itself along the

annular region until it is completely removed from the sleeve, thereby allowing the sleeve progressively to recover radially onto the substrate.

19. A method according to claim 18, wherein the assembly is used to recover the sleeve onto an electrical substrate, preferably a cable splice or termination.
20. An assembly of an elastic sleeve and a tubular member, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.
- 10 21. A method of encasing a substrate using an assembly of an elastic sleeve and tubular member, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.